

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 RABAT 001752

SIPDIS

STATE FOR NEA/MAG, NEA/PI
PARIS FOR ZEYA AND DEA HABIB
LONDON FOR TSOU
ROME FOR ROSE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/19/2010
TAGS: [MO](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [SNAR](#)
SUBJECT: MOROCCO POLITICAL HIGHLIGHTS

REF: RABAT 1539 AND PREVIOUS

Classified By: Pol/C Tim Lenderking for Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

(U) THIS MESSAGE IS SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED. PLEASE
PROTECT ACCORDINGLY.

Table of Contents

- King Weighs in on Gaza Pullout
- King Receives New Mauritanian Minister
- Extraordinary Session for Parliament?
- New Berber Party Holds Constituent Congress
- France and Spain to Increase Mediation on Western Sahara
- Round-Up of Illegal Migrants in Northern Morocco
- Drug Seizures in Fes and Marrakech

----- KING WEIGHS IN ON GAZA PULLOUT -----

1. (U) Through a series of messages addressed to world leaders, King Mohammed expressed his satisfaction with the withdrawal of Israeli settlers from the Gaza strip, according to official Moroccan news agency, Maghreb Arabe Presse (MAP). The King called Palestinian President Abbas on August 16 to congratulate him and express his support for a Palestinian state as well as Abbas' efforts to stabilize the Palestinian Authority. The King also congratulated Israeli PM Ariel Sharon on August 17 for his "wisdom, far-sightedness, and genuine commitment to the civilized option, based on negotiation, for the establishment of a just, comprehensive, and lasting peace in the Middle East." His final public message was addressed to President Bush on August 17, whom he described as one of the "chief architects" of the pullout. He commended the President's "sincere commitment" and "untiring efforts" to reach a lasting peace in the region. King Mohammed is the chairman of the Al-Quds Committee.

----- KING RECEIVES NEW MAURITANIAN MINISTER -----

2. (C) On August 15, King Mohammed received at his palace in Tetouan Mohammed Ould Abed, Mauritania's new Minister of Economic Affairs and Development and special envoy of the recently established ruling Military Council for Justice and Democracy in Mauritania, according to MAP. Abed expressed Mauritania's "resolve to continue enhancing the good brotherly relations uniting the two countries," and applauded the King's "great willingness to consolidate bilateral relations." Although Morocco has remained silent on the Military Council for Justice and Democracy's coup in early August, his granting of an audience to an envoy from the new government appears to signal tacit acceptance of the new regime and a desire to maintain stable relations. On the margins of an August 15 meeting, MFA Multilateral Affairs Director Mohamed Loulichki observed to Polcouns that the new regime in Nouakchott seemed to be "making all the right noises."

----- EXTRAORDINARY SESSION FOR PARLIAMENT? -----

3. (U) Moroccan press accounts continue to report on the possibility that the parliament will hold an extraordinary session in September to consider the draft bill on political parties that the government submitted to parliament on July 11 (reftel). According to Arabic daily and PJD-affiliated Attajdid, the seven party caucuses in the lower house of parliament reportedly are not opposed to holding an extraordinary session. The media notes that the party law, as currently drafted, allows parties two years to come into compliance with its provisions. If parliament does not take up the legislation until the opening of its next legislative session on October 14, the news reports explain, parties would have until mid- to late-October 2007 to comply with the new law, which is a month after parliamentary elections would normally be set to take place.

NEW BERBER PARTY HOLDS CONSTITUENT CONGRESS

14. (U) The newly established Amazigh Democratic Party of Morocco held its constituent congress on July 31, according to French-language weekly La Gazette du Maroc. According to BBC's website, the party was set up to "promote cultural, linguistic and religious diversity, as well as federalism (in Morocco), promoting a secular society, defense of biodiversity...human rights and compliance with international conventions pertaining thereto." The party elected Ahmed Adghirni secretary general.

FRANCE AND SPAIN TO INCREASE MEDIATION ON WESTERN SAHARA

15. (U) Spain and France are planning to increase their efforts to resolve the Western Sahara conflict, according to a August 17 report from the Arabic-language daily Al Alam. The report states that the foreign ministers from the two countries met last week and decided to take common action to resolve the conflict and increase European-Maghreb cooperation.

ROUND-UP OF ILLEGAL MIGRANTS IN NORTHERN MOROCCO

16. (U) Morocco's efforts to stem the flow of would-be illegal migrants transiting the country netted 134 individuals in northern Morocco between August 12-16, according to local press reports. On August 16, a Royal Marine patrol picked up 30 Moroccans near Al Hoceima as they attempted to migrate to Spain, while on August 12 auxiliary police forces arrested 104 sub-Saharanans who sought to cross the border into the Spanish enclave of Melilla, according to MAP.

DRUG SEIZURES IN FES AND MARRAKECH

17. (U) According to MAP reports, the Royale Gendarmerie of Fes seized 500 kilos of hashish that were concealed in a passenger vehicle on August 18. The driver of the vehicle fled the scene. On August 15, Moroccan police forces reportedly "dismantled" a drug trafficking gang in Marrakech, according to MAP. The police arrested the unidentified leader of the gang and seized 10 kilos of hashish in the operation. The leader's arrest concludes a steady crackdown on the gang, which included arrests in July and August of four gang members and the seizure of some 800 kilos of hashish.
RILEY